

The Minister directly invited the comments of the Committee on two aspects of this question, "not just as to the principle, but perhaps the method, should we charge a fee?" He made it clear that any fee would only apply to executive placement.

I would not ever wish to see us charging a fee for the general volume we carry on because we must help those at the low end who cannot afford it. However, at the top end it might be valid to charge a fee. (26:20)

The opinion of the Committee was somewhat divided on this question. On the one hand there were those who agreed that private placement agencies should have a clear mandate in the specialized field of executive placement where they have been very successful and clearly meet a demand; where CMCs now have a limited capacity, lacking both the necessary trained counsellors and employer contacts.

On the other hand, the majority of the Committee agreed in principle that CMCs should continue to offer placement assistance to all levels of job seekers including executive and professional. Employers should be able to list all employment opportunities and receive referrals from the public employment agency without paying fees. The choice of the employer in selecting the method of recruitment of staff should not be restricted.

However the Committee has reservations about the Division taking on a new and highly specialized task of providing services for executive and professional placement in the manner suggested. To be confident of reaching the effective corporate level an expanded service would require additional funds to pay for suitable premises and the salaries of counsellors with superior training. Authorizing a scale of fees for one level of placement would be an anomaly in a service otherwise offered at no cost.

It would be difficult for the Division to take over a viable part of the market from the entrenched private agencies who have a high degree of acceptance by employers. Unless the Division were conspicuously successful the image of the public employment service held by employers would be further damaged. It is more important that the Division concentrate on making its basic placement function more effective without adding any new areas of activity requiring expensive specialization.

The Committee agreed that extensive expansion of the professional and executive placement services would be a questionable use of public funds and recommends that the Division should not develop a distinctive specialized service in executive and professional placement, even if a fee were to be charged for this service.

Casual and Part-Time Placement

The private sector objected to another area of placement carried on in a limited way by CMCs, the operation of casual centres in the larger metropolitan areas. As described by the Division, they provide service to employers who seek workers on a short-term basis and to workers who want jobs of a short-term nature. The jobs handled by these casual centres are of a week or